



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Great Lakes & Ohio River Division

WRDA '99

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999, which was signed by the President on August 17, 1999, provides a number of new and amended authorities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer to support States, tribes and local governments with water resources development, management, protection and restoration. In all, some 68 sections of the Act are applicable to sites within the Great Lakes Basin. This fact sheet will provide a summary of a few of these authorities. The implementation policy of these authorities has not yet been formulated by Corps Headquarters, and may impact their applicability.

Great Lakes Basin Program

The John Glenn Great Lakes Basin Program, at Section 455 of WRDA 1999, contains four sub-parts specific to the Great Lakes basin:

- a) **Strategic Plan.** Directs the Corps to prepare a periodic report to Congress that contains a strategic plan of water resources needs of the Great Lakes, existing Corps programs to meet these needs, and recommendations for new or modified authorities to meet unfulfilled needs.
- b) **Biohydrological Information.** Directs the Corps the lead a multiagency effort to develop an inventory of water-related data for the Great Lakes.
- c) **Recreational Boating.** Directs the Corps to conduct a study of the economic benefits of recreation boating on the Great Lakes, with emphasis on harbors and channels maintained by the Corps.
- d) **Water Use Activities & Policies.** Directs the Corps to provide technical assistance to the Great Lakes States to develop interstate guidelines to improve the consistency and efficiency of State-level water use activities and policies.

Environmental Dredging

WRDA 99 amends Section 312 of WRDA 90 which enables the Corps to perform environmental dredging of contaminated sediments at areas outside Federal navigation channels. The amendment in WRDA 99 decreases the non-Federal cost share for dredging and disposal to 35 percent.

Great Lakes Navigation

Section 456 directs the Corps, in cooperation with the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, to study the feasibility of modifications to improve commercial navigation on the Great Lakes navigation system, including locks, dams, harbors, ports, channels, and other related features

Section 372 modifies the authority for the navigation channel on St. Marys River, Michigan to provide an additional foot of overdraft between Point Louise Turn and the Sault Sainte Marie Locks.

Western Lake Erie Basin

Section 441 directs the Corps to conduct a study to develop measures to improve flood control, navigation, water quality, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat in a comprehensive manner in the western Lake Erie basin, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, including watersheds of the Maumee, Ottawa, and Portage Rivers.

Environmental Infrastructure

WRDA 99 contains three separate Sections that authorize the Corps to support Great Lakes States, tribes and local governments with design and construction of environmental infrastructure for wastewater, water supply, combined sewer overflows, and environmental restoration. The authorities are for areas within the State of Ohio (Section 594), Northeastern Minnesota (Section 569), Lake and Porter Counties, Indiana and Oakland County, Michigan (Section 502).

Flood Mitigation and Riverine Restoration Program

Section 212 establishes a new program for conducting flood damage reduction projects that conserve, restore, and manage the natural functions and values of floodplains. The program emphasizes nonstructural approaches to preventing or reducing flood damages. The maximum Federal cost per project is \$30 million.

Flood Control

Section 201 of WRDA 99 amends Section 205 of the Flood Control Act of 1948 which established a continuing program for the Corps to design and construct small flood control projects. This amendment increases the limit of Federal funding per project to \$7 million.

Section 102 provides specific authorization for flood control projects at: Hamilton Dam, Michigan; Irondequoit Creek, New York, and; Port Clinton, Ohio.

Remedial Action Plans

Section 505 of WRDA 99 amends Section 401 of WRDA 90 which enables the Corps to support the development and implementation of Remedial Action Plans at Great Lakes Areas of Concern. This amendment allows the non-Federal share to come from non-profit or private sources.

Shore Protection

Section 215 of WRDA 99 amends the Corps continuing authority for small shore protection projects under Section 103 of WRDA 86. The amendment changes the cost sharing for periodic nourishment of shore protection projects, directs the Corps to prepare a report to Congress on the state of the shores of the United States (including the Great Lakes), and establishes a national coastal data bank containing data on the geophysical and climatological characteristics of the shores of the United States.

Navigation

WRDA 99 contains project-specific authorization for small navigation projects at the Whiting lakefront, Indiana, Detroit River, Michigan, and Fairport Harbor, Ohio. It also authorized a study of navigation improvements at Toussaint River, Ohio.

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

Section 210 of WRDA 99 amends the Corps authority for the restoration of aquatic ecosystems under Section 206 of WRDA 96. The amendment allows non-profit groups to be a local sponsor in restoration projects.

Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

Section 209 of WRDA 99 amends Section 204 of WRDA 92, enabling non-profit organizations to partner with the Corps on projects that use dredged material from Federal navigation projects to protect, restore or enhance wetlands and aquatic ecosystems. Section 217 of WRDA 99 amends Section 145 of WRDA 76, decreasing the non-Federal share for placement of dredged material on beaches.

For More Information

The Corps' Great Lakes Region web site contains information on existing programs and authorities for supporting States, tribes, local governments and non-profit groups, with examples from around the Great Lakes:

<http://www.usace.army.mil/lrd/gl.htm>

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